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Finance Committee Minutes 03/09/05

ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
 MINUTES OF MEETING
 7:30 PM O'NEILL ROOM COMMUNITY SAFETY BUILDING
 3/9/05

ATTENDEES:

McGaffigan*	Fey*	Dunn*	O'Neill*	Mahoney*
DeCoursey*	Connors	Simmons		
Tosti*	Foskett*	Deyst*	Ronan*	
Piandes	Franclemont	Jones*	Olsen*	
DuBois*	Howard*	Fanning*		Kneeland*

* Indicates present

VISITORS: Council on Aging Lynne Chair Lynne Larkin, COA Director John Jope, COA members Elizabeth McGaffigan, Shirley Chapski, Paul West, Harry McCabe, Human Services Director Patsy Kraemer, Permanent Town Building Committee Chair John Cole, Moderator John Worden, Paul Bayer

MINUTES of 3/2/05 approved as corrected. Unanimous.

BUD 21d COUNCIL ON AGING: Larkin presented an alternative budget using a handout. This budget would move a social worker from the COA Transportation Enterprise Fund to Bud 21d thus freeing transportation funds. This fund has a current balance of \$60k but is predicting a deficit for FY05. Grants to COA are received from the Sanborn Trust. The Sevoyan Trust has a balance of \$298k but must be spent only for direct benefits to elderly, not for salaries. The monthly newsletter is printed at no cost to the COA but 50% of postage is paid by COA.

ART 54 PEIRCE SCHOOL: Cole reviewed all projects.

Brackett is complete with a balance of \$24k.

Hardy construction is complete. There is an \$18k balance in Hardy funds. The PTBC filed suit against the architect last fall. A mediation session is scheduled for May. The award could range from \$60k to \$150k.

Dallin is somewhat behind schedule but \$500k remains in the contingency fund and, based on previous projects, is unlikely to be entirely spent.

Stratton & Thompson plans are ready for submission to SBAC. Due to the SBAC moratorium, only preliminary plans were prepared leaving a balance of \$215k.

Peirce punch list clearance has cost \$58k in additional architect fees. A handicap access ramp has a "slight arc" and a state board has directed it be rebuilt at a cost of \$69k. The PTBC has appealed. If the appeal fails, the PTBC will sue the architect. The Peirce building fund has a balance of \$13k.

Cole proposes to use the funds from Brackett together with "borrowed" funds from Stratton & Thompson to pay the architect fee. FinCom members questioned this approach which would alarm the Stratton & Thompson communities. They saw no reason to pay the architect while the architect's ramp design may require rebuilding.

Cole stated that delaying payment of fees could subject the town to substantial late payment penalties under the contract. VOTED to transfer \$24k from Brackett to Peirce.

ART 53 CELEBRATION OF ARLINGTON'S 200th ANNIVERSARY: Worden reviewed the history of similar celebrations and suggested \$100 be appropriated to fund a committee to organize a celebration. VOTED \$100 with a comment that the FinCom expects that additional funds would be raised from private sources. Unanimous.

BUD 9 LEGAL: The GenGov SubCom (Howard) recommended a salary correction and an increase of \$30k in the Workmans Compensation budget. The latter is the Manager's recommendation after reviewing the \$60k increase projected by the department. VOTED \$77,095. Unanimous. SubCom to get details on Fy 05 & 04 expense transfers and on salary correction elements.

BUD 22&23 RETIREMENT: Finances SubCom (Dunn) explained that the 5.8% increase in the contributory pension was caused by the Retirement Board deciding to base its projected investment income at 7.75% rather than 8% w/o adjusting the fully funded end date. This budget was approved by the state. The Retirement Board chair had agreed to 4.5%/yr several years ago in exchange for approval of a large one year increase. FinCom members discussed ways to control this expense. Foscett stated that he had reviewed the Retirement Board's budget (not paid directly from the General Fund) and it was reasonable. VOTED \$6,345,069. Unanimous.

BUD 5 COMPTROLLER: Finances SubCom (Dunn) provided a substitute budget with several salary corrections. He explained the high consulting costs related to a new student information system and the water billing system. The department attributes these unbudgeted expenses to the sudden death of a key employee.

VOTED \$837,401. Unanimous.

COMMITTEE: Next mtg 3/14.

Peter B Howard Secretary 3/10/05

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